

## Urban Survival

Who are the top tennis teacher  
Los Angeles? What is the gay com-  
munity like in Washington, D.C.? Wh  
the best sportswriter in Texas? Is  
Chicago's drinking water polluted?

All of these questions have so  
thing in common. They are asked—and  
answered—by a lively gaggle of publi-  
cations known as city magazines, a di-  
verse, eclectic and sometimes unruly  
group of enterprises to crowd under one  
rubric. But most, whatever else they do,  
aspire to be urban survival manuals,  
guiding their readers toward the best  
that city life has to offer while warning  
them away from its pitfalls and dangers.  
The genre is by and large prospering:  
while magazines in general lost adver-  
tising pages in 1975, city magazines as  
a group increased their ads by some  
1,100 pages over 1974, a gain of more  
than 10%. In fact, four of the five U.S.  
monthlies with the fastest growing ad-  
vertising volume are city magazines.\*

Most of the successful city maga-  
zines have borrowed—some of them  
heavily—from the graphics, format and  
trendy chic of *New York* (circ. 364,000),  
the pacesetter weekly first published as  
an independent magazine by Clay Felker  
in 1967. (Felker had been its editor  
in an earlier and simpler incarnation,  
when it was a Sunday supplement of the  
now defunct *New York Herald-Tribune*.) Regular features akin to Felker's  
"The Underground Gourmet" (budget-  
minded restaurant reviews) and "The  
Passionate Shopper" are staple fare, and  
*New York's* penchant for parlor-game  
lists ("The Ten Worst Judges," "The 100  
Greatest Freebies in Town") has been  
widely copied. Unlike *New York*, which  
often ranges afield to cover events of na-  
tional interest (last week's cover story  
was a profile of Jimmy Carter), other  
city magazines—all of them monthlies  
—generally confine their efforts to local  
stories. Among the best:

► *Texas Monthly* (circ. 185,000),  
based in Austin, is a city magazine that  
covers an entire state with an enthusi-  
asm that reflects the youth of Publisher  
Michael Levy, 29, and Editor William  
Broyles, 31. Levy, a Wharton School of  
business graduate who had practically  
no journalism experience before starting  
*Texas Monthly*, gave up the idea of con-  
fining a magazine to Houston or Dallas  
because neither city seemed likely to  
provide a circulation of 100,000—the  
minimum he felt he needed to succeed.  
Instead, three years ago, he started a  
magazine that would appeal to urban  
dwellers anywhere in the state. "We like  
to think we're writing about things that

that most sacred of cows, college foot-  
ball. *Texas Monthly* has lacked original-  
ity and punch in its graphics, but it has  
become an articulate voice for the ris-  
ing urban consciousness in the third  
most populous state in the Union.

► *Chicago* (circ. 140,000) began life  
24 years ago as *Chicago Guide*, a su-  
permarket giveaway that listed radio  
programs of the city's classical music  
station, WFMT. In 1971, Publisher Ray-  
mond Nordstrand, 43, who came to *Chi-  
cago* from WFMT (he is still its station  
manager), decided to add articles and  
start selling the magazine to the public.  
Since then it has become one of the fat-  
test books in the country. Today, a typ-  
ical 230-page issue carries more than 100  
pages of advertising. Last year Nord-  
strand dropped the "Guide" from *Chi-  
cago's* title. But on the inside, *Chicago*  
is still mostly a gray, though useful, land-  
scape of listings that includes in a typ-  
ical issue an index guide to 1,000-plus  
local events, critiques of nearly 80 films,  
as well as WFMT radio and public TV  
listings. *Chicago* runs occasional pieces  
of fiction and articles that cover every-  
thing from the Mafia to houseplants in  
a style that one reader describes as  
"funky, chic lakeside journalism."

► *Philadelphia* (circ. 122,000) has  
no peers among city magazines in in-  
vestigative reporting. Among the imag-  
inatively illustrated magazine's bigger  
muckraking scoops: the revelation that  
a *Philadelphia Inquirer* reporter was  
blackmailing banks and businesses by  
threatening to give them bad publicity  
(the reporter was suspended from the *In-  
quirer* and eventually convicted), and an  
exposé detailing how local politicians  
had fouled up Philadelphia's Bicenten-  
nial celebration by mismanaging funds  
(as a result, the city restored to the wel-  
fare fund \$500,000 that it had earlier di-  
verted to the Bicentennial). *Philadel-  
phia's* success is due to the unwavering  
localism of Publisher Herbert Lipson,  
46, who was a charter member of a  
booster organization, Action Philadel-  
phia, before taking *Philadelphia* over  
from his father in 1961. "We wouldn't  
do a piece on Jerry Ford," he says,  
"unless it turned out he was born in  
Philadelphia."

► *Los Angeles* (circ. 100,000), now  
owned by a medical-book publisher, was  
once eagerly sought by *New York's* Felk-  
er. It has developed over the  
past 15 years into a smooth, narrow-for-

P-CONROY, John

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET *50 CY. 01.1 Chicago*

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Inquiry from John Conroy, Chicago Guide Reporter *Guide*

FROM:

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

912 Key Bldg.

2 October 1974

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

1. Assistant to the Director  
1F-04 Hqs.

Attached for your information and action. I presume you will reply to Mr. Conroy's questions. You may wish to coordinate your response with [redacted] OGC, who has just completed a response to a Congressman on this same subject.